

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The William D. Ruckelshaus Center is conducting interviews to evaluate the process and results of the first phase of our involvement in Chehalis flood mitigation issues, which included development of the Alternatives report and the work group's recommendations to the Governor's office. The evaluation will be used by the Center to evaluate our impact and continue to improve our collaborative processes. The evaluation can also be used by the work group and Ruckelshaus Center project team to inform the design and implementation of the next phase of the project. In order to encourage you to be as frank as possible, the interviews will be confidential. This means we will share a list of who was interviewed and key themes that emerged, but names will not be associated with any of the statements.

Below is some background on the process, followed by the questions. They are provided in advance to offer you the opportunity to reflect prior to the interview. It is not necessary to answer the questions in advance.

The 2010-11 Washington State Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2020, which required the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to produce a report for the Governor and Legislature that identifies recommended priority flood hazard mitigation projects in the Chehalis River Basin. The Center was asked by the Governor's Office to help OFM - in collaboration with the five state agencies, affected and interested federal agencies, 2 tribal governments, and 11 local governments - produce the report. The Center's tasks were to coordinate the report using technical information provided by other agencies and organizations, and to conduct a situation assessment of flood alternatives and relationships between the responsible parties and stakeholders. The report was completed in December 2012.

In August 2012, the Governor's Office asked the Center to convene a small work group to inform the Governor's recommendations for the 2013-15 biennial budget. A framework document containing the group's recommendations were presented to the Governor on November 14th, 2012. Governor Gregoire endorsed the group's recommendations and her proposed 2013-15 budget directs \$28.2 million in capital funds to implement them. Recommendations include budget allocations to: continue to investigate the feasibility of major capital projects, construction of local flood damage reduction projects, fish habitat projects and a comprehensive plan for the enhancement of aquatic species in the Basin. Governor Inslee has endorsed the recommendations of the work group and included full funding in his capital budget. He has asked the work group to continue providing guidance and oversight during the upcoming biennium.

Below are the questions we would like to discuss. This first set is intended to evaluate the work completed and process to date:

1. What is your/your organization's role related to flooding in the Chehalis?

2. What is your overall impression on what has happened on these issues since the beginning of 2012?
 - a. What were the major drivers or causes?
3. Have there been major advances? Any shortcomings or disappointments?
 - a. What were the major drivers or causes?
4. Has the Center's involvement (facilitation, coordination, technical expertise, strategic oversight, university involvement, etc.) brought anything unique to the process? If so, how has this contributed, positively and/or negatively?
5. During the situation assessment by Jim Kramer in early 2012, respondents identified the following as issues of main concern relating to flooding in the Chehalis Basin: (1) disastrous impacts on individuals, community and I-5, (2) impacts of potential flood solutions on the environment, (3) impacts to livestock, (4) and building in the floodplain. In the last 18 months, have you seen progress in addressing some or all these issues?
 - a. What contributed to this?
6. In the assessment, respondents said there was not a common information base in the community regarding flood damage and options to reduce damage. One of the hopes of the Alternatives report was that it would help create and/or expand a common information base. Do you think the report did that? What gaps, if any, in shared information still exist?
7. How would you describe the collaborative process used in the Basin over the last 18 months?
 - a. Has your opinion changed since this process started about the use of collaborative processes?
8. Is there anything we should have asked about the process to date that we did not?

The following questions are intended to help inform the process moving forward:

1. What would successful flood mitigation in the Chehalis Basin look like over the long term (10, 25, 50 years)? How will you know it has been successful? What will you see happening or not happening? What will be the same or different?
 - a. What are the major challenges to achieving that success? Where are the opportunities for progress?
2. What will need to happen in the next biennium to put or keep the Basin on this path to success?
3. In what ways can the Center be most helpful in the next biennium?
4. Are there specific elements of a collaborative process that would be most helpful in the next phase?
5. Is there any other information that would be helpful to the Center in evaluating its role, or for the next phase of work in the Chehalis?
6. Is there anything we should have asked about the upcoming process that we did not?
7. Is there anyone in particular you think should be involved in this mid-point evaluation?